

**ANG****Bayan**

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Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

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## Support the Moro people's struggle against intensifying attacks by the US-Arroyo regime!

**A**fter the US and the Arroyo regime declared the Communist Party of the Philippines and New People's Army "terrorists," this time they want to include the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in their "terrorist" list. This is a mere formality since the US and the regime have long been treating the MILF as "terrorist." The Arroyo regime even boasts that it is unnecessary to declare the MILF a "terrorist" organization just to be able to obtain funds from the US and pursue its all-out war against the MILF under US imperialism's vacuous "war against terrorism."

This trend has a clear objective—to justify intensified US armed intervention that it plans to initiate by sending American combat troops to MILF areas in Mindanao aside from places operated in by the Abu Sayyaf bandit group. Eventually, even territories of the New People's Army will be covered.

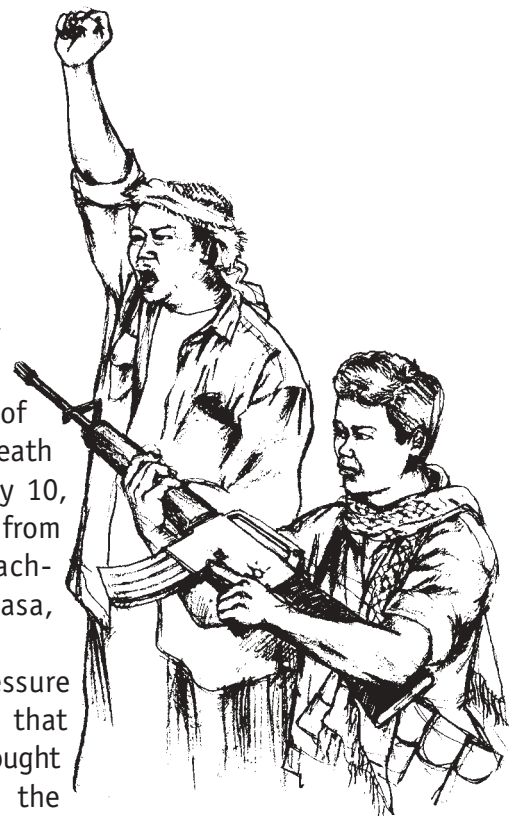
To provide basis for the MILF "terrorist" declaration, the US, through its terrorist cell in the Philippines, has perpetrated a series of bombings in various areas in Mindanao, with Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes as their co-conspirator. The successive bombings in the cities of Davao and Koronadal from March to May were abhorrent. More than 50 innocent civilians were killed and hundreds were wounded in these terrorist attacks.

The regime immediately pinned the blame for the bombings on the "MILF-NPA-Abu Sayyaf cabal," using this as pretext to ransack Moro communities in Davao and Koronadal and arrest civilians. Some of them have yet to be surfaced. Under military and police direction, three Moros were also shot to death by

elements of the Davao Death Squad on May 10, a few meters from a PNP detachment in Sasa, Davao City.

The pressure and threats that have been brought to bear on the MILF are also meant to force the latter to sign a "final peace agreement" that was one-sidedly prepared by the GRP, which contains nothing but the MILF's surrender to the regime. The Arroyo regime has imposed a June 1 deadline on the MILF for surrendering its personnel supposedly responsible for the bombings and issue an outright declaration of acquiescence to the regime's preconditions for the peace talks. Otherwise, the MILF will be declared a "terrorist" organization and the peace talks scuttled.

In truth, the AFP has been intensifying its military operations against the MILF since December 2002 to coerce it into submitting to the framework of capitulation which the Arroyo government wants or to scrap the peace talks altogether. The AFP even said at first that its renewed attacks had to do with pursuit operations against the criminal Pentagon gang. The truth eventually surfaced and the AFP admitted that its real target was the MILF. Again, the victims of this violent campaign are no other than the hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians who have been forced



to evacuate to avoid AFP bombings and attacks.

On April 2, a few hours after a peace rally launched by Moro organizations to condemn terrorism and support the peace talks' resumption, US and AFP psywar operatives treacherously undertook the bombing of the Davao wharf. The bombing was used to brandish anew the arrest warrants against MILF chair Hashim Salamat and other MILF leaders. On May 17, Arroyo ordered intensified bombings in supposed "terrorist" lairs in Mindanao—meaning Moro communities (*see related article on p. 2*)

The MILF has not been brought to its knees and has instead intensified its revolutionary armed struggle.

ALL this shows that it is not the MILF but the US and the AFP who are the real terrorists. The MILF and the Moro people's struggle for self-determination and against national oppression remains just and legitimate no matter if the US and the AFP include the MILF in their list of "terrorists."

It is correct for the MILF to launch guerrilla attacks against the reactionary military to defend its victories, resist the AFP suppression campaign and advance the Moro people's struggle.

The MILF has been holding on ably and fast to its weapons in the face of the "terrorist" tag. This and the Moro people's all-out advance of other arenas of struggle will serve as a shield in the expected intensification of the GRP and AFP's brutal suppression campaigns and the further escalation of US armed intervention. AB

## Bombings in Mindanao The regime shows off to the US

The AFP immediately implemented Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's order to bomb supposed MILF bases in Mindanao. This, so she could show off and hopefully get more aid from her imperialist master to whom she is now paying court.

On May 18, the AFP began practically day-long bombings and ground assaults in North Cotabato, Lanao del Norte, Maguindanao and the Zamboanga peninsula. In the first two days alone, OV-10 Bronco planes dropped up to 30,000 pounds of bombs on Lanao del Norte and Zamboanga. Three thousand more troops were pulled out of Luzon and the Visayas to be brought to Mindanao. Up to 318,000 people in Zamboanga del Norte and 30,000 in Lanao del Norte were forced to evacuate due to the intensified military campaign.

US President George W. Bush was likewise quick to say that more American troops would be joining the Balikatan exercises in Mindanao. He also pledged more aid to the AFP for its anti-MILF operations. Meanwhile, the White House announced that the next target after the MILF will be the NPA.

The military operations have reaped criticism. Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said that they were a direct attack on Moro communities. The operations, he said, were ordered by the militarist and puppet Arroyo who wanted to fawn on and offer tribute to, her lord and master whom she was visiting.

Eight senators, including Arroyo's partymates are now against the continuing military campaign in Mindanao. Sen. Aquilino Pimentel said that the bombings were no less than "state-sponsored terrorism."

Fr. Angel Calvo of the Coalition of Mindanao Peace Advocates assailed Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko for saying that there was no war going on in Mindanao, "just dropping bombs and shelling." AB



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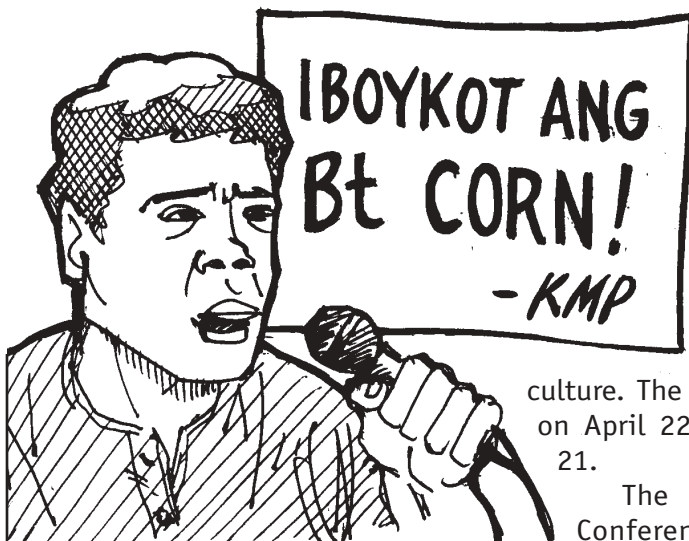
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# Bt corn: Toxic corn from Monsanto

**"B**oycott Bt corn!" was the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas' (KMP) urgent call in the face of the impending commercial growing and dissemination in the country this May of



genetically modified corn products from Monsanto, a giant agro-chemical multinational company.

Militant farmers continue to intensify their opposition to the Bureau of Plant Industry's grant to Monsanto of various permits. They opposed Monsanto's field testing in Bukidnon, Isabela, Camarines Sur and South Cotabato. In 2001, their mass actions featured uprooting Bt corn seedlings in different areas.

In this regard, the KMP is currently urging Congress to pass into law three bills filed by Bayan Muna representatives. One of them, HB No. 3381, calls for suspending the entry, field testing and dissemination of genetically modified organisms (GMO) in the country while there has been no thorough evaluation of their safety and their producers' compliance with health and environmental protection standards.

Aside from Bayan Muna representatives, former Sen. Wigberto Tañada, the Catholic archbishops of Iloilo and Bohol, Sen. Bob Bown of Australia, former US Peace Corps volunteer Andrew Halaram as well

as actors and actresses, academics, scientists and a number of legislators expressed support for a hunger strike conducted by peasant leaders and environmentalists in front of the Department of Agriculture. The hunger strike began on April 22 and ended on May 21.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines and the College Editors Guild of the Philippines likewise supported the hunger strike. In solidarity, a thousand farmers from Los Baños, Laguna and more than 500 from Leyte, Negros and Iloilo launched their own hunger strike. Supportive mass actions were also held in Baguio City, Davao del Sur, South Cotabato and the Caraga region.

**Bane to the people.** Monsanto's genetically modified corn, more commonly known by its brand name YieldGard, has a gene from the *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) microbe. The Bt gene gives corn the ability to create a toxin lethal to the Asiatic corn borer pest.

Although Bt corn will initially eradicate the Asiatic corn borer, it may also kill off other non-destructive insects and other fauna.

Eventually, even the Asiatic corn borer may develop resistance to Bt corn, and will thus be more difficult to eradicate. Worse, native corn varieties in surrounding areas may be pollinated and their species vanquished by Bt corn. Because Bt corn was designed not to produce seeds for reproduction, farmers are obliged to buy seeds from Monsanto every planting season.

Farmers in the US and Mexico are now reeling from such detrimental effects because Bt corn was first disseminated in their countries. Studies are being conducted on indications that certain deleterious effects on human health such as stomach and colon cancer, birth defects and nervous disorders have been caused by GMO products.

## **Opposition from other countries.**

Due to such negative effects, countries in the European Union and in Asia (except for the Philippines) have imposed moratoriums on the dissemination of Bt corn. The US and Canada have stopped importing genetically modified corn, soya and cotton since 2000. Tasmania, one of Australia's states, has also imposed a moratorium on GMO products.

In the US itself, members of the American Corn Growers Association are strongly opposed to GMO. They have asked the US Environmental Protection Agency to seriously rethink its decision to allow Monsanto to market Bt corn.

Despite intensifying and expanding protests, the Arroyo regime will push through with its plans to grow and market Bt corn and other GMO products commercially. AB

# Government defenseless against SARS

**The reactionary government is not ready to deal with any epidemic because caring for the people's health is not on its list of priorities**

**S**ARS or Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, a contagious illness for which no cure has yet been found, has been spreading in various countries for the past several months. SARS symptoms include high fever that may be accompanied by tremors, muscle and joint pains and weakness. In two to seven days, this will be followed by dry and intense coughing and eventually, difficult breathing, which may be fatal.

By May, there were more than 3,000 cases and almost 600 deaths recorded in different countries. The disease was first reported in 2002 in China and spread to Hongkong and other countries this year.

There have been some SARS cases in the Philippines. Still, the regime insists that there is nothing to worry about.

The government is deathly afraid about news breaking out that the Philippines is among the countries with SARS. It fears a reduction in the number of overseas contract workers (OCW) and their remittances to the Philippines once other countries restrict the entry of Filipino OCWs due to the SARS scare. Libya, Bahrain, Turkey and Singapore which employ tens of thousands of OCWs have recently banned the entry of Filipinos because of news that SARS has afflicted the country. The regime is likewise worried about a further collapse in tourism and a further contraction in foreign investments.

The regime's desperation to earn dollars is in fact a more primary concern compared to any precautionary measure. For instance, the government flip-flopped on its policy regarding Filipinos who wish to work in countries severely affected by SARS, such as Hongkong. In March, the government announced a ban on sending workers to Hongkong, only to rescind it very soon after due to its fear of a reduction in the dollar remittances that have been propping up the Philippine economy and complaints from those who want to work in Hongkong. They would rather face the risk of SARS, they said, than die here of starvation.

The truth is that the reactionary government has

no decent program to deal with an epidemic like SARS or any serious illness that may ravage the country, for that matter. The regime boasts of having automatically allotted P1.5 billion for anti-SARS programs. But this is a tiny amount compared to the people's gigantic health needs. The senate has also asked where the funds have gone since they fail to see any significant improvement in anti-SARS equipment and programs. The regime assigned the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) to concentrate on SARS victims, but the facility has only 50 beds. Other patients at the RITM who had serious illnesses that RITM specializes in were forced to transfer to other hospitals.

Public sector health workers who are expected to care directly for SARS patients, and who are among the groups most vulnerable to the disease, are woefully lacking in protection. There is a serious lack of N95 masks issued to them. Public hospitals also lack equipment, medicine and personnel. Due to the lack of personnel, government health workers are forced to work their fingers to the bone. Despite all this, they receive low wages. Also, the government has never allotted funds for benefits such as hazard pay, overtime pay and night shift differential pay. This pitiable state persists in spite of the threat posed by SARS.

In fact, health workers have practically no protection against any disease. When they do fall ill, applying for a loan at the Government Service Insurance System is an uphill climb even if their illness is work-related.

The majority of the Filipino people are vulnerable to so many diseases aside from SARS because of the reactionary government's blatant neglect. This year, the government budget for the entire Department of Health amounts to a mere P9.9 billion, equivalent to



*"SARS", page 5*



# Ka Elvira, the caring revolutionary

This May, Red fighters scattered along the mountains and meadows of the Ilocos-Cordillera region the ashes of Ka Elvira—veteran of the revolution and loving comrade.

She was known for her hearty laughter. She had a soft heart for comrades in the field. She was a veteran, with the qualities of Tandang Sora and Gabriela Silang.

Ka Elvira or Isabelita del Pilar, one of the first comrades to conduct revolutionary work in the Ilocos-Cordillera region, died of a serious illness on April 13, 2003. Before she died, she was a member of the Party Regional Committee in Ilocos-Cordillera from 1998 and was assigned to finance work.

Despite the excruciating pain she suffered due to successive operations and ineffective drugs, she still thought of comrades and saw to their welfare.

She cried whenever comrades and their families in the guerrilla fronts could not receive sufficient financial subsidies. She creatively raised funds and solicited material help for comrades. As a sign of her concern, she often sent food that she cooked herself to comrades, especially in guerrilla zones in Abra and Ifugao where she conducted revolutionary work for a long time.

In school, she was called “beauty and brains.” She would’ve gone a long way had she pursued a bourgeois lifestyle, but she chose to serve the masses. She was the first student in Baguio City to be expelled from school for activism. Several times she was arrested or chased by the military during strikes and demonstrations. She was among the first to organize workers in Baguio City, Benguet and La Union. She integrated with the workers and often joined them in their picket lines and strikes.

Ka Elvira was one of the first students to heed the call to go to the countryside. She served as an organizer and eventually joined the NPA before the imposition of martial law. She went to a guerrilla zone in Abra in 1973. It had just been opened and the comrades who had been deployed to the area had no experience in building guerrilla zones. They faced the massive deployment of military forces because the area was the fiefdom of the warlord-politician Carmelo Barbero, then defense undersecretary of the fascist Marcos.

Many people from Malibcong, Lacub and Tineg still talk about how Ka Elvira tirelessly cared for the sick when an epidemic struck their towns. The epidemic was con-

tained because under Ka Elvira’s leadership, comrades and the masses studied the possible causes and remedies for the disease. She was then the medical officer of the NPA unit operating in the area. She would walk through the forest even at night and under the rain, just to be able to give even temporary relief to those who were ill. A story they have never forgotten recounts how Ka Elvira sucked the phlegm from the nostrils of a child who was running a high fever and could no longer breathe.

She was arrested in 1974 and gave birth to her first child in prison. When she was released in 1976, she was deployed to Ifugao. While on a mission to bring arms and ammunition to Ifugao in 1978, the vehicle she was riding fell into a ravine and exploded, seriously injuring her. She was once again arrested in hospital. Upon her release in 1980, she returned forthwith to Ifugao, even with one of her lungs ruined and several ribs broken from the accident.

In Ifugao, the masses knew instantly that Ka Elvira’s unit was around because upon coming home from their swidden farms, they found their houses cleaned and there was cooked food ready. She never despaired despite the hard-

*“Ka Elvira”, page 6*

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## *“SARS”, page 4*

1.2% of the overall budget of P804 billion. On the other hand, P48.6 billion or 27.7% has been allotted to debt service.

The yet incurable SARS is just one of the dangers faced by so many Filipinos who fall ill and die of simple, easily avoidable and curable diseases like tuberculosis (TB), malaria and dengue and even mere diarrhea.

Thirty million Filipinos or 30% of the population has TB and 75 die from it daily, even as the disease has been eradicated in developed countries. Malaria is a health problem in 66 or 84% of the country’s provinces. Dengue epidemics ravage cities and towns almost every two years. The victims are all impoverished folk deprived of care by the government.

As protesting health workers say, it is SARS that is behind all of this—the Severely Anemic Resources for Health Services.

AB

# The lopsided road to peace in Palestine

In direct contrast to the openness showed by Palestine, the Israeli government persistently refuses to undertake the necessary steps to resolve its decades-long conflict with Palestine. (See related article in AB's previous issue)

Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon was less than truthful when he said that his government would loosen its grip on the Palestinian people. Attacks continue without letup along with the occupation of Palestinian cities and repressive and brutal acts by Israeli forces against the Palestinian people. Likewise, Israel has not put a stop to, and has even justified, the expansion of Israeli colonies within Palestine.

The newest "solution" proffered by the "roadmap" is the collective handiwork of the US government and Israeli representatives, and is therefore extremely lopsided against Palestinian interests.

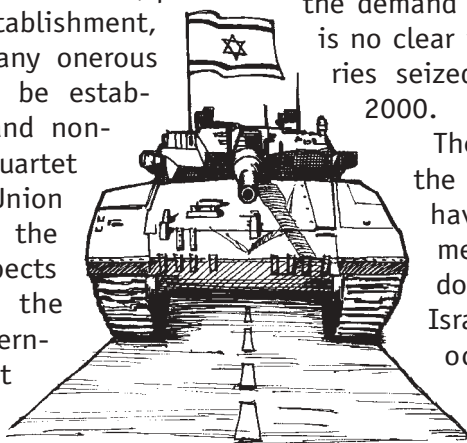
It is supposed to culminate in the establishment of the longed-for independent state of Palestine, possibly by 2005. But before its establishment, Palestine must first comply with many onerous and lopsided conditions. Should it be established, the product will be a raw and non-independent state because it is the Quartet (the US, United Nations, European Union and Russia—the group that drafted the "roadmap") that will decide on all aspects related to the establishment of the Palestinian state: what kind of government will be set up, how it will be set up, who should be elected, how

they should be elected, what policies should the state pursue, how the state should be run, among others. Through the "roadmap" and the Quartet, the US has laid down the manner in which it could perpetrate its unbridled intervention in Palestine's internal affairs.

It is supposedly "possible" for an "independent Palestinian state" to be established even before 2005, but only if Palestine can comply early enough with all the conditions imposed on it. Nonetheless, such a "state" would have "temporary" borders, bear only "some attributes" of sovereignty and will remain under the Quartet's supervision.

On the other hand, the "roadmap" mandates Israel's immediate withdrawal only from territories it has been occupying since March 2001. The occupying forces' withdrawal from territories seized from September 2000 to March 2001 is contingent on Palestine's "security performance" or its response to the demand for it to disarm. Besides this, there is no clear provision for Israel to return territories seized from Palestine before September 2000.

The "roadmap" makes it appear that the actions of Israel's military forces have all been in self-defense and are mere reactions to Palestinian moves. It does not recognize the fact that it is Israel's violent, illegal and immoral occupation of Palestine that has spurred the Palestinian people to fight for their rights. AB



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## *"Ka Elvira", from page 5*

ships they suffered in opening the guerrilla zone and served as an inspiration to newly recruited guerrillas and the masses. She was happy to be of service to the masses, organizing them and providing them political education. She always remembered to see to the masses' health and economic welfare, especially since Ifugao is one of the most impoverished and neglected provinces of the reactionary government.

Ka Elvira liked to tell stories and she was known for it. She

recounted their experiences in building guerrilla zones, the anomalies committed by Conrado Balweg and his cohorts who formed the CPLA and the problems that resulted from their treachery, and her many stints in prison (in Camp Dangwa, Camp Olivas and Camp Bagong Diwa), all interspersed with her crisp, hearty laughter.

In the 32 years she devoted to the movement, she was exemplary in her revolutionary zeal and her spirit never faltered. She was a wellspring of energy, firmness and

strong fighting spirit. During the Second Great Rectification Movement, she assisted those whose revolutionary spirit had weakened and helped in drawing rich lessons from the long revolutionary experience that she was a part of.

She always said, "The movement began with practically nothing. We joined the NPA with no experience on how to use weapons or build guerrilla zones. All we had was revolutionary theory and the hope of a new future for the oppressed." AB

## Burnham exposes military-Abu Sayyaf collusion

AMERICAN missionary Gracia Burnham, who was held captive by the Abu Sayyaf for more than a year has confirmed the long-time collusion between AFP officials and the terrorist group.

In her book entitled *In the Presence of my Enemies* which came out in the US in the first week of May, Burnham revealed that an AFP general bargained with Abu Sayyaf leader Abu Sabaya for a share of the captives' ransom. The deal failed to push through because the general wanted too high a percentage.

Burnham also said that it was the AFP that supplied the Abu Sayyaf with medicine, rice and other foodstuff. She said soldiers would leave the items by the roadside whenever the Abu Sayyaf passed areas near military detachments. She also said that the military supplied the bandits their weapons and ammunition.

Gracia's husband Martin, who was captured with her, died in a failed rescue operation on June 7, 2002. Gracia was hit in the leg and one other captive, a Filipino, was killed.

The collusion between the military and the Abu Sayyaf had earlier been exposed by other captives and by Lamitan, Basilan parish priest Fr. Cirilo Nacorda. According to Fr. Nacorda, the AFP purposely allowed the bandits to escape when the Abu Sayyaf attacked Lamitan in 2001. But nothing came out of the investigation on their complaints.

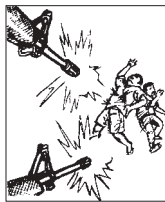
As a result of Burnham's revelations, a congressman has filed a resolution calling for the reinvestigation of the Lamitan incident. Meanwhile, the senate plans to issue subpoenas to the military officials involved in the incident. Among them are Maj. Gen. Romeo Dominguez (now chief of the Northern Luzon Command), Col. Juvenal Narcise and Maj. Eliseo Campued.

## Dean Malay passes away

DEAN Armando J. Malay passed away on May 15 at the age of 89, leaving behind a brilliant record of six decades of struggle as a patriotic journalist, activist and human rights advocate.

Malay started out as a reporter in 1935. For fighting the Marcos dictatorship, he was incarcerated along with the entire editorial board of *WE Forum* in 1982. They were acquitted of subversion after the EDSA I uprising in 1986.

Along with progressive and revolutionary forces, Malay set up a number of human rights organizations that defended the people's rights and welfare. He had a long and fruitful friendship with the Communist Party. (AB will publish a longer article on Dean Malay in its next issue)



## Peasant leader summarily executed

MELENCIO Gloriani, 51, an officer of the Kalipunan ng mga Magsasaka sa Kabite-KMP was found dead by relatives on May 9, a few days after he was arrested by the Philippine National Police. His body was riddled with bullets when it was found at Sitio Kapantayan, Barangay Bucal, Maragondon, Cavite.

Meanwhile, his two companions, peasant activists Ronilo Pagao, 22 and Gerry Ciacos are still detained at Camp Pantaleon in Imus on charges of being members of the New People's Army.

## Human rights violations intensifying in Region 11

NO less than the Commission on Human Rights has admitted that cases of human rights violations in Region 11 (Southern Mindanao) are on the rise. Sixty-seven cases were filed in the first quarter of this year—116.3% higher compared to the same period last year. The cases included attempted murder (12), assault (17) and intimidation (6) as well as shooting, bombings, arson, rape, coercion, abduction, illegal arrests and illegal detention.

## Mabini death centenary observed

THE 100<sup>th</sup> year of Apolinario Mabini's death was commemorated on May 13. Mabini, known as the "Sublime Paralytic," was born in 1864 in Tanauan, Batangas. Although he came from a poor family, Mabini was able to finish law in 1894 through his own perseverance. Not long after, he joined the Katipunan.

Due to an illness, he became a paralytic in January 1896. Despite his condition, he was imprisoned by the Spanish colonialists from 1896 to 1897 for his involvement in the Katipunan.

He served as prime minister of the First Philippine Republic when it was declared in June 1898. He was captured by the

American colonialists in 1899 and exiled to Guam.

Allowed to return to the Philippines in 1903, US officials demanded that he swear allegiance to the American flag. Unlike other officials of the First Republic, Mabini refused to kowtow to the foreign occupation forces until his death from cholera on May 13, 1903.

### **Bañez-AGILE collusion bared**

A CONGRESSMAN has exposed the collusion between former Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) commissioner Rene Bañez and AGILE, an institution set up by the US CIA, to destroy the BIR and put up the Internal Revenue Management Authority to cover up the huge anomalies committed by BIR officials.

Bañez's grant of billions of pesos worth of tax breaks to the Metro Pacific Group of Companies, where he formerly worked, was one of the factors behind the fall in BIR collections last year, said Southern Leyte congressman Aniceto Saludo. It is estimated that the BIR failed to collect up to P38 billion in taxes due to this anomaly. Metro Pacific includes corporate giants like PLDT, Smart, Piltel, Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation and Negros Navigation.

Saludo said that the regime makes it appear that it is ordinary BIR employees who are at fault for the decline in collections to cover up Bañez's involvement in graft and corruption.

### **PIATCO contract cancelled**

AFTER extorting and benefiting from it, the Arroyo regime eventually cancelled the Philippine International Air Terminals Inc.'s (PIATCO) contract. PIATCO was assigned to build the NAIA Terminal 3.

As early as last year, Macapagal-Arroyo had wanted to boot out the Cheng family, the project's lead investors, as a favor to Lucio Tan who wanted control over all international and local airport terminals. The Supreme Court's cancellation of the contract this May leaves Lucio Tan's group free to enter the fray and reap the spoils from the fully constructed NAIA Terminal 3.

PIATCO is now demanding that the government return the \$500 million it spent in building the terminal. Macapagal-Arroyo and her cohorts are sure to rake in millions of dollars once more from the scheduled negotiation for the reimbursement of PIATCO's expenditures.

### **Bombings rock Saudi Arabia, Chechnya, Morocco**

A SERIES of bombings in Saudi Arabia, Chechnya and Morocco this May caused casualties to hundreds of persons and damage to facilities. All the areas bombed were under the jurisdiction of countries that opposed the US war against Iraq.

The US was quick to blame the al Qaeda for the bombings. But there is strong suspicion that psywar operatives from the US Central Intelligence Agency perpetrated the bombings to punish countries that did not agree to wage war on Iraq and justify the continued presence of American troops in the Middle East and Central Asia.

More than 40 people died and several others wounded in successive bomb explosions in four places in Casablanca, Morocco on the night of May 16. On the other hand, two bombs exploded in Chechnya on May 13 killing 54 and wounding 110. On May 12, three bombs exploded in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia killing 34 and wounding more than a hundred.

The bombing in Saudi Arabia was the first attack against Americans and other foreigners since US troops occupied Iraq. Prior to this, the Saudi government had been demanding the pullout of American troops from the country because their presence triggered deepening and expanding anti-US sentiments in Saudi Arabia.

Morocco, on the other hand, is a close US ally but expressed strong opposition to the US attack on Iraq.

Chechnya was an autonomous republic under Russia during the existence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). It declared independence after the USSR's dissolution but was re-annexed by Russia in 1994. It is currently fighting a war of national liberation against Russia.

Russia likewise strongly opposed the US war in Iraq. The US is now using the Chechnya bombing as a pretext for securing Russia's cooperation in the international war against "terrorism" being pushed by the US.





## Indonesia declares martial law in Aceh

UP TO 45,000 Indonesian troops attacked Aceh after Indonesia declared martial law on May 19. The declaration was made after talks collapsed between the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Indonesian government due to GAM's refusal to give up its bid for independence in exchange for autonomy. Indonesia has accused GAM of torching 30 schools, using this as the pretext for the invasion.

GAM has been fighting for an independent Aceh for close to 27 years. The province which lies in northern Indonesia, is strategic to Indonesia and the imperialist countries because of its rich oil and natural gas resources.

## North Korea pulls out of anti-nuke treaty

NORTH Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea or DPRK) backed out May 13 from a treaty with South Korea banning nuclear arms in the entire Korean peninsula. The DPRK said that the US has rendered the accord meaningless.

The Bush administration has systematically and completely destroyed the denuclearization process in the Korean peninsula, said the DPRK in a statement. "Thus, the declaration of the Korean peninsula's denuclearization has become a dead document."

For months, the US has been coercing North Korea into scrapping its nuclear arms program. North Korea has asserted that arming itself will deter threatened US aggression.

## CPN(M) removal from terror list urged

FORTY-FIVE parties and organizations from various countries urged on May 4 the removal of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) or CPN(M) from the US list of supposed terrorists.

The organizations, which included the NDFP, participated in the 12<sup>th</sup> International Communist Seminar held in Brussels, Belgium.

The US included the CPN(M) and the United People's Front (UPF) which the CPN(M) leads, in its list of "terrorists" on April 30, with the goal of

blocking the ongoing peace talks in Nepal.

The 45 organizations likewise called for the expulsion of 48 American military advisers of the reactionary government and expressed support for the peace process in Nepal.

## Commander of US troops in Iraq charged

NINETEEN Iraqis filed charges against Gen. Tommy Franks, commander of American forces in Iraq, as well as other US officials, for crimes against humanity. Among others, they have been accused of indiscriminately killing Iraqi civilians, bombing a marketplace, targetting ambulances and failing to stop the massive and indiscriminate looting of hospitals. There is strong evidence that the US not only allowed the looting to take place but even encouraged it.

The Iraqis' lawyer Jan Fermons has filed the case in Belgium under a law allowing Belgian courts to try anyone, even foreigners, for war crimes committed in any part of the world.

The US has warned the Belgian government against trying the case. The case, however, is in danger of coming to nought because of a provision in Belgian law that states that such cases should be filed in the accused's country of origin if the accused comes from a "democratic" country.



## Strike paralyzes France

UP TO two million workers struck against the French government's new pension system, paralyzing the country for almost the entire day on May 13.

Up to 80% of international and local flights were cancelled. Ships and trains also came to a standstill. Many hospitals and schools closed down, as did the postal service. Up to 700,000 joined 100 protest actions held nationwide.

The workers struck to oppose a new law requiring them to work for an additional two and a half years before retiring and enjoying full pension benefits.